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Seed Use, Costs, and Trade

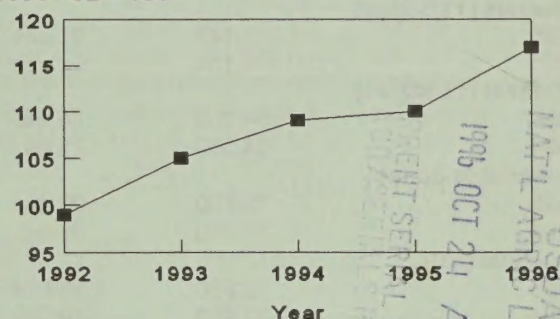
- Seed use in 1995/96 for major field crops is likely to exceed the previous year by 10 percent.
- Prices paid by farmers for seeds in 1996 have been above 1995 levels for all major field crops and most forage crops.
- Both seed exports and imports increased in value in 1995 over 1994, leaving the U.S. net trade balance in seeds about the same.

Average seeding rates and seed cost per acre for major field crops, in 1995 were as follows: *Corn*—average seeding rate was 26,588 kernels per acre, up 3 percent from 1994. The average seed cost per acre at \$24.50 was 4 percent higher than in 1994, reflecting higher corn seed prices and seeding rates per acre. *Soybeans*—average seed cost in 1995 was \$16.80 per acre, 3 percent lower than in 1994, the result of lower soybean seed prices. Most of the northern soybean-growing States have higher seeding rates and therefore greater seed cost per acre than do the majority of the southern growing States. *Cotton*—the average seeding rate, at 15 pounds per acre, was 1 pound lower than in 1994, whereas average cost per acre at \$9.67 was higher because of a 7-percent increase in cotton seed prices. *Fall potatoes*—the average cost per acre was \$169.82, down 19 percent from 1994, due primarily to a decline of 22 percent in the fall potato seed price. The average seeding rate at 21 cwt. per acre was same as in 1994. Seeding rates were higher in Colorado, Oregon, and Washington than in other growing States because potatoes are grown on irrigated land. States with less moisture, on the other hand, tend to have lower seeding rates. *Winter wheat*—average seeding cost per acre at \$9.10 was higher than in 1994, due to a higher seeding rate per acre. *Spring wheat*—average seeding cost per acre at \$10.24 was slightly higher than in 1994 also due to a higher seeding rate.

In the 1995/96 crop year, total seed use for eight major crops (corn, sorghum, soybeans, barley, oats, wheat, rice, and cotton)

Seed price index

1990 - 92 = 100



Source: USDA, ERS, NASS data

is likely to exceed 1994/95 by 10 percent because of increased planted acreage. USDA's April 1996 prices-paid index for all seeds was 117, up 6.4 percent from 1995.

The total value of both U.S. seed imports and exports in 1995 increased compared with 1994, leaving the net seed trade balance about the same as in 1994. The major field crop seeds exported were corn and soybeans. The major countries of destination were Canada, Mexico, and Italy for corn seed, and Mexico, Japan, and Italy for soybean seed.

This issue of **AREI UPDATES** summarizes information on seeds from the 1995 Cropping Practices Survey and other sources. Only aggregated data are presented. To obtain data for individual major producing States included in the survey, see the box "State Level Data" on page 4.

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About AREI UPDATES

AREI UPDATES is a periodic series that supplements and updates information in **Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators (AREI)**, USDA, ERS, AH-705, Dec. 1994. **UPDATES** report recent data from surveys of farm operators and others knowledgeable about changing agricultural resource use and conditions, with only minimal interpretation or analysis. Please contact the individual listed at the end of the text for additional information about the data in this **UPDATE**. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have other questions about **AREI UPDATES** or **AREI**, contact Richard Magleby, (202) 219-0436. [rmagleby@econ.ag.gov]

Table 1—Seeding information on major field crops and producing areas, 1994-95

Crop ¹	Acres planted 1,000	Seeding rate per acre	Seed cost per acre ² Dollars	Acres with purchased seed Percent	Acres with treated/enhanced seed Percent
Corn (10 States)					
1995	55,850	26,588 ³	24.50	100	6 (Herbicide resistant seed)
1994	62,500	25,824 ³	23.54	100	3 (Bt enhanced seed)
Soybeans (14 States)					
1995	51,840	70 lbs.	16.80	71	21 (Pesticide treated seed)
1994	42,750	69 lbs.	17.25	72	21 (Pesticide treated seed)
Cotton (6 States)					
1995	11,650	15 lbs.	9.67	64	81 (Pesticide treated seed)
1994	10,023	16 lbs.	9.49	66	62 (Pesticide treated seed)
Fall potatoes (11 States)					
1995	1,147	21 cwt.	169.82	83	80 (Pesticide treated seed)
1994	1,134	21 cwt.	210.00	81	81 (Pesticide treated seed)
Winter wheat (13 States)					
1995	34,265	74 lbs.	9.10	33	36 (Pesticide treated seed)
1994	34,500	71 lbs.	7.68	39	36 (Pesticide treated seed)
Spring wheat (4 States)					
1995	15,750	96 lbs.	10.24	36	56 (Pesticide treated seed)
1994	17,250	95 lbs.	10.11	38	62 (Pesticide treated seed)
Durum wheat (ND)					
1995	2,950	109 lbs.	12.24	41	50 (Pesticide treated seed)
1994	2,450	103 lbs.	12.60	37	50 (Pesticide treated seed)

¹States included are listed in box "Cropping Practices Survey." To obtain data for individual States, see box "State Level Data."

²Based on data from farmers who used purchased seed.

³Kernels. Average plant population per acre was 23,170 in 1995 compared with 22,580 in 1994.

Source: USDA, ERS, Cropping Practices Survey data.

Table 2—Seed use for major U.S. field crops¹

Crop	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96 estimated	1994/95- 1995/96 % change
	1,000 tons						
Corn	540	566	528	563	510	571	12
Sorghum	34	48	39	34	34	45	32
Soybeans	1,701	1,705	1,726	1,914	1,877	1,929	3
Barley	350	310	314	283	266	283	6
Oats	306	290	285	240	205	190	-7
Wheat	2,787	2,931	2,973	2,889	2,679	3,129	17
Rice	180	195	180	210	205	205	0
Cotton ²	110	120	115	117	118	144	22
Total	6,013	6,165	6,160	6,250	5,894	6,496	10

¹Crop marketing year. ²Upland cotton.

Source: USDA, ERS.

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Table 3—April farm seed prices, 1992-96

Item	Unit	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Change 95-96 Percent
Field seed:							
Corn	\$/80,000 kernels	71.80	72.70	72.40	77.10	77.70	1
Grain sorghum	\$/cwt.	72.30	74.50	82.10	78.70	84.00	7
Oats	\$/bu.	4.26	4.39	4.69	4.51	5.19	15
Barley	\$/bu.	5.10	5.00	5.18	5.37	6.49	21
Wheat (spring)	\$/bu.	6.06	5.98	7.37	7.12	8.10	14
Wheat (winter)	\$/bu.	7.41	7.73	7.90	7.80	8.50	9
Soybeans	\$/bu.	12.40	12.40	13.60	13.40	14.80	10
Cotton	\$/cwt.	59.70	62.70	63.50	68.20	73.00	7
Potatoes	\$/cwt.	6.95	8.60	10.20	7.90	10.30	30
Rice	\$/bu.	16.50	15.40	22.00	15.10	17.50	16
Forage seed:							
Red clover	\$/cwt.	122.00	148.00	148.00	134.00	172.00	28
Fescue, tall (Alta&Kentucky 31)	\$/cwt.	67.80	87.00	71.50	88.10	109.00	24
Orchardgrass	\$/cwt.	100.00	122.00	161.00	148.00	141.00	-5
Ryegrass, annual	\$/cwt.	43.80	56.70	64.60	67.60	58.80	-13
Timothy	\$/cwt.	66.30	80.60	76.00	71.00	76.00	7
Lespedeza, sericea	\$/cwt.	92.80	92.10	169.00	178.00	191.00	7
Alfalfa, proprietary	\$/cwt.	252.00	269.00	266.00	274.00	277.00	1
Seed price paid index							
(1990-92 = 100)		99	105	109	110	117	6

Source: USDA, ERS, compiled from NASS April survey of farm supply dealers.

Table 4—U.S. exports and imports of seed for planting, 1991-95

Item	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Change 94-95 %
-----\$ million-----						
Seed exports:						
Forage	101	114	116	120	115	-4
Vegetables	220	221	218	240	242	1
Flower	14	19	19	22	27	-23
Corn ¹	181	171	168	181	165	-9
Grain sorghum	28	34	34	20	12	-40
Soybean	41	36	28	23	25	9
Tree/shrub	2	3	2	2	2	0
Sugarbeet	3	3	3	4	2	0
Other	82	68	31	41	77	88
Total	672	669	619	652	667	2
Seed imports:						
Forage	30	45	45	39	44	13
Vegetables	79	82	83	85	97	14
Flower	24	27	31	35	43	23
Corn ²	15	35	29	44	35	-20
Tree/shrub	2	2	2	1	2	100
Other	14	15	17	23	22	4
Total	164	206	208	227	243	7
Trade balance in seeds	508	463	411	425	424	-0.2

¹Not sweet, not food aid. ²Certified.

Source: USDA, ERS, compiled from Foreign Agricultural Service data.

Table 5—U.S. exports of corn and soybean seed by country of destination and volume, 1991-95

Commodity and Country	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Change 94-95
	metric tons					%
Corn seed:						
Canada	7,561	8,192	8,678	15,421	16,890	6
Mexico	7,963	12,472	15,750	16,453	15,175	-8
France	10,953	13,859	8,177	6,188	7,732	25
Spain	2,076	2,853	2,492	4,004	4,796	20
Italy	21,773	23,955	14,178	11,782	15,042	28
Netherlands	10,354	2,791	4,834	7,977	7,062	-11
Subtotal	66,952	65,054	56,039	62,170	66,697	7
All others	26,770	13,455	32,600	43,126	17,724	-59
Total all countries	93,722	78,509	88,729	105,296	84,421	-20
Soybean seed:						
Mexico	4,827	32,674	19,472	8,891	23,1159	160
Italy	65,571	34,500	27,764	15,711	14,672	-7
Japan	6,947	7,341	7,439	9,654	19,741	104
Subtotal	77,345	74,515	54,675	34,256	57,572	68
All others	13,659	9,070	14,216	13,700	6,410	-53
Total all countries	91,004	83,585	68,891	47,964	63,982	33

Source: USDA, ERS, compiled from Foreign Agricultural Service data.

Cropping Practices Survey

The 1995 survey included corn, cotton, soybeans, wheat, and potatoes and represented about 173 million acres in major producing States, which account for about 76 percent of the total U.S. acreage for these crops.

Corn: IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, NE, OH, SD, and WI.
 Soybeans: North = IL, IN, IA, MN, MO, NE, and OH. South = AR, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, and TN.
 Cotton: AR, AK, CA, LA, MS, and TX.
 Winter wheat: CO, ID, IL, KS, MO, MT, NE, OH, OK, OR, SD, TX, and WA.
 Spring wheat: MN, MT, ND, and SD.
 Durum wheat: ND.
 Fall potatoes: CO, ID, ME, MI, MN, NY, ND, OR, PA, WA, and WI.

State Level Data

Seed rates and cost data for 1995 by crop for the individual surveyed States (see box on Cropping Practices Survey for listing of the States) may be obtained through ERS AutoFAX:

1. You must call from a telephone attached to a fax machine. Place call to 202-219-1107, using the handset attached to your fax.
2. When you get a voice prompt wait for menu options, then **press 4**. When prompted for the document number, enter **20212**.
3. When asked for a yes or no response, press **1** for yes and **2** for no on the telephone keypad.

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